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**MAYOR'S TASK FORCE REPORT  
ON TELEGRAPH AVENUE**

Mayor Loni Hancock  
November 23, 1992

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## REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS MAYOR'S TASK FORCE ON TELEGRAPH AVENUE

### INTRODUCTION

On September 28, 1992, the Mayor of Berkeley announced the creation of a special Task Force to evaluate the physical and social problems impacting Telegraph Avenue, People's Park, and other Southside areas and to offer recommendations to the Mayor and Council. The members of the Task Force are listed in Appendix A.

The Task Force appointed by the Mayor had five meetings. Initial discussion led to agreement that although the situation in many ways is a microcosm of problems facing our larger society, it is also a situation that must improve for the good of the entire community.

The report contains the recommendations of the Task Force in the following areas:

- \* Community Values
- \* A Long Term Vision
- \* Adult Social Services
- \* People's Park Activities
- \* Physical Improvements to Telegraph
- \* Law Enforcement
- \* Alternatives for Youth
- \* A Process for Continuing Work

### TASK FORCE ACTIVITIES

The Task Force divided into five working groups to develop specific recommendations on law enforcement, alternative activities for youth, urban design improvements, social services for adults, and a working group devoted to drafting a values statement to guide our work and share it with the larger community during implementation.

In addition to the formal meetings, there were small group meetings of the Task Force members and young people, university students, business people, owners of buildings in the South Campus area, People's Park supporters, judges and probation staff, urban design experts and youth workers. These meetings were extremely helpful to our understanding of "other people's realities" and an important source of inspiration and ideas.

The Task Force recommends that this report, its recommendations and the Values statement be shared with the larger community at a forum sponsored by the League of Women Voters and through a speakers bureau that will provide speakers to all interested community groups.

### **An Affirmation of Community Values**

The Berkeley community shares a commitment to assure:

- \* The safety of its citizens;
- \* Respect for the rights of each person in their free and open pursuit of social, political, academic and business activities;
- \* The enrichment of our civic environment through cultural and ethnic diversity and cooperation.

These values and aspirations deserve clear and explicit definition of the roles and responsibilities of government and of citizens.

Berkeley's well-deserved reputation for tolerance and openness to new ideas has been interpreted by some as an attitude that "anything goes" here. The community must reassert the reasonable standards of mutual respect that are part of the tradition of free speech and exchange of ideas that have made our city one of the most forward looking on the earth. Diverse styles of life enrich our community as long as they do not impinge upon the right of others to the peaceful enjoyment of their own lives. Dissent and debate are vital, as long as it is recognized that the community has a right to come to decisions and take action to carry them out.

We citizens, and elected representatives of the city of Berkeley commit ourselves to these values.

### **A LONG TERM VISION**

The proposals for short and long term actions and the process for continuing work are based upon a long term vision.

A long term vision for the Telegraph/Southside Area includes:

- \* a vital and diverse commercial area that meets the needs of residents and the campus population and that attracts and serves a citywide and regional market;
- \* public open spaces that are well maintained, attractive, safe and used by all segments of the community;

- \* a pedestrian street for a portion of Telegraph Avenue;
- \* the development and maintenance of public, private, and campus property that is clean and attractive;
- \* a safe environment day and night for living, business, shopping, recreation and cultural activities;
- \* significant reduction in illegal activities and behaviors that harass people;
- \* significant reduction in criminal and drug related activities;
- \* an on-going close working relationship between the city, merchants, property owners, residents, university administration, students, churches and other institutions and community groups for continuing commitments, actions and programs to enhance the Southside.

A long term vision for youth in the community includes:

- \* a sense of hope and opportunity for all young people;
- \* support systems and mentoring for youth at risk;
- \* job training and job opportunities integrated with school and services;
- \* a network of support and opportunity programs using public and private facilities throughout the community;
- \* a broad-based civic commitment to the success of all youth;
- \* a teen center to serve as a hub for safe youth activities throughout the city.

A long term vision for the homeless and mentally ill on the streets include:

- \* coordinated and immediate mental health, community and police crisis intervention;

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- \* a central mental health facility providing all crisis, outpatient and substance abuse programs under one roof;
- \* daytime facilities providing a place off the streets with referral services;
- \* reduction in the overall population on the streets through increased low rent housing, residential treatment centers, and jobs;
- \* coordinated regional activities with other cities for fair share the responsibility for providing essential services.

## **ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE**

Practical programs are needed to help the Berkeley community address the kinds of anti-social activities which plague Telegraph Avenue. The mentally ill and homeless need our help and assistance with dignity and with realistic programs away from public streets. There must be a linkage between law enforcement approaches and social service approaches in order to respond to anti-social activity and its resulting intimidation and to serve those in need.

### **IMMEDIATE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS:**

(Initial 6 months)

- \* **EXPAND THE MENTAL HEALTH MOBILE CRISIS TEAM** to include daytime services for an initial three month period with specific emphasis and focus on Telegraph and Shattuck Avenue. Careful data on services and outcomes should be kept so policy recommendations can be made at the end of the initial pilot program.
- \* **EXPAND THE HOMELESS OUTREACH PROGRAM** for an initial six month period to include outreach staff to provide street level social service/clinical interventions to help individuals find appropriate services in impacted areas. A survey and assessment should be completed of individuals in need in these areas in order to maximize the impact of social service interventions.
- \* **FUND THE EXPANSION OF THE BERKELEY CARES VOUCHER PROGRAM** to serve the community through Telegraph and Downtown retail businesses and major employers. This will redirect cash off the streets and reduce aggressive panhandling.
- \* **SUPPORT EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS FOR THE HOMELESS** by funding the services of BOSS, The Chaplaincy and The Jobs Consortium to focus on cleaning and graffiti abatement programs in Telegraph and Downtown.
- \* **PROVIDE A DAYTIME CENTER** as a safe place off of the street.

**INTERMEDIATE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS:**

(Initial 24 months)

- \* **EXPLORE HOMELESS HOUSING** and program alternatives on a regional (county) basis such as at closed or under-used military housing and public owned vacant buildings. Establish a round trip shuttle service from local pick up points to the regional housing facility.
- \* **ASK THE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM** to make a first priority of finding funding for a local substance abuse program.

**LONG TERM RECOMMENDATIONS:**

(2-5 years)

- \* **LOCATE AND BUILD A CENTRAL BERKELEY MENTAL HEALTH FACILITY** providing all crisis, out patient, and substance abuse programming under one roof.
- \* **ESTABLISH A CITY OF BERKELEY ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE PROGRAM** with a 72 hour detoxification facility.
- \* **DEVELOP A MODEL FOR THE FEDERALLY FUNDED "SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT" PROGRAM.**
- \* **WORK WITH ALTA BATES TO ESTABLISH A CRISIS INTERVENTION UNIT** and a private sector substance abuse program.
- \* **DEVELOP A CITYWIDE AND REGIONAL COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION SYSTEM** for community health and social service programs to make access to services and placement easier as well as more efficient case management of individuals referred to such services.

## **PEOPLE'S PARK PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE**

Every working group of the Task Force offered recommendations concerning People's Park. While Telegraph Avenue is the physical center of the Southside, People's Park is often a key focal point.

We believe the city-university lease agreement generates an opportunity to develop the park as a safe and welcoming open space to attract neighbors, visitors, and all citizens to the area. However, the violence that has accompanied the implementation of the city-university agreement is not tenable. The community has the right to make decisions and carry them out. Those few who choose not to honor this long sought after agreement do not have the right to exercise a veto, or harass, or try to intimidate those who disagree with them. If the Park cannot be improved and used by all people, as called for in the city-university lease, it should be used for something else.

### **IMMEDIATE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- \* **INSTALL A USABLE SURFACE ON THE UNPAVED BASKETBALL COURT.** Many community members have indicated that they would like to use the courts but the gravel surface is unsafe.
- \* **CREATE AN IMPROVED LANDSCAPING AND GARDENING PLAN** and explore a non-profit employment program for unemployed and homeless individuals on the east and west ends of the park. Also explore the possibility of using some of the land for urban farming.
- \* **MAINTAIN UPKEEP OF THE FREE BOX.** - Procedures should be developed to keep and distribute donated clothes in a clean and orderly manner.
- \* **INCREASE ENFORCEMENT OF CRIME AND VANDALISM.** - Police should give top priority to ridding the park of drug dealers, people who try to intimidate anyone using the Park in a peaceful and lawful manner, or who vandalize the restrooms which are desperately needed by homeless people. The city simply cannot afford to repair and replace sinks and toilets that are routinely vandalized.
- \* **UPHOLD COMMUNITY VALUES** by making a final good faith effort to develop a Park for all people. If that proves impossible, we urge the City Council to place a measure on the ballot to allow citizens to vote on continuing the park lease.

- \* **EXPLORE PLANNING AND PAINTING A MURAL** on the west wall of the restroom structure or building a peace wall tile project for the structure.
- \* **INVOLVE STUDENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF PEOPLE'S PARK** by requiring city youth program staff, campus recreation staff, and park staff to develop activities for youth.

## **PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE**

The long term social and economic health of the Telegraph area is dependent on an attractive physical environment for living, working, shopping, and recreation. As the Task Force deliberated, Mayor Hancock and Councilmember Woodworth worked with the City Manager to ensure that agreed upon improvements were enacted. Actions already taken or are underway include:

- \* **Increased wattage in street lights**
- \* **Newly painted curbs and crosswalks**
- \* **A graffiti abatement program hiring homeless people**
- \* **Youth anti-graffiti work with local artists to plan and paint murals**
- \* **Purchase of distinctive shade umbrellas and other streetscape improvements.**

In addition we recommend:

### **IMMEDIATE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- \* **CLOSE TELEGRAPH AVENUE TO TRAFFIC ON HOLIDAY WEEKENDS THIS DECEMBER.** Utilize the street for high quality commercial activities, arts and crafts, music and food. To be effective this program will need publicity, improved signage, parking and traffic control. Planning should begin immediately.
- \* **INCREASE AFFORDABLE PARKING** by establishing a flat night rate at the Sather Gate garage and by requesting that the University make its parking lots open to the public during the holidays, vacations, after business hours, and on weekends. Also, the city should have "free parking days" in the Telegraph area during the holidays.
- \* **ENFORCE SIDEWALK SWEEPING AND LITTER LAWS** by an enforcement program to ensure compliance with city regulations requiring merchants to sweep the area in front of their stores and by citations for littering to be issued by the police
- \* **INITIATE AN ANTI-LITTER CAMPAIGN** which includes a poster contest, signs on trash containers (for example "Do the Right Thing"), and the purchase of recycling containers similar to those in Sproul Plaza obtained by the ASUC.

- \* **CREATE A GRAFFITI ABATEMENT PROGRAM** by contracting with an appropriate homeless service provider to hire youth and homeless people to clean up widespread graffiti in the Telegraph area in a three month demonstration program to change the expectations of the business and residential communities. During this period, city staff and this graffiti contractor should work with the Telegraph Avenue Merchants Association and affected property owners to develop a contractual long-term strategy for prompt graffiti removal, either using a fee-for-service or fixed monthly payment approach. Use this liaison work to publicize Berkeley's anti-blight ordinance.

#### **INTERMEDIATE RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- \* **PLACE KIOSKS AT CENTRAL LOCATIONS** to serve as community bulletin boards for posters and signs and to diminish the indiscriminate littering of buildings and utility poles. The kiosks could also serve the Berkeley Convention and Visitors Bureau by providing a place for tourist maps and other information to be distributed.
- \* **IMPROVE SIGNAGE** to major streets and places of interest such as the U.C. art museum and parking lots.
- \* **ESTABLISH A FOCUSED NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING PROCESS TO CONSIDER MAKING TELEGRAPH INTO A PEDESTRIAN PROMENADE.** Part of this process could include an 8 week experiment in weekend closure of Telegraph Avenue during daytime hours. This experiment should be in late spring and summer, when outdoor dining and street use for a variety of activities are most feasible. A committee should be established to plan for this closure experiment. The charge to the committee should include development of criteria for evaluating success, such as improved sales for existing merchants, minimal traffic and parking problems, and reduced social and crime problems.
- \* **EXPLORE INTERIM USE FOR THE HASTE STREET** vacant lot, such as for a bicycle parking lot.

## LONG TERM RECOMMENDATIONS:

- \* **CONSIDER MAKING TELEGRAPH AVENUE A PEDESTRIAN STREET.** Telegraph Avenue has unique attributes that make it perfect for consideration as a pedestrian street on the model of college towns, including Boulder, Colorado; Burlington, Vermont; Santa Monica, California; as well as many European cities. The dynamic and colorful layers of activity here include an array of street vendors, many restaurants, major book and record stores, and a very dense residential neighborhood. These factors suggest that concentrating pedestrian activity into a narrower street, from Dwight to Bancroft, could further the enjoyment and economic viability of the Avenue.
- \* **COMPLETE PLANS FOR PEDESTRIAN LIGHTING.**
- \* **DEVELOP A LONG RANGE ECONOMIC/MARKETING STRATEGY** for Telegraph including the existing commercial and retail sectors, and the possibility of considering a farmer's market to directly serve students and other residents of the southside.
- \* **COORDINATE PLANNING BETWEEN THE CITY AND THE UNIVERSITY** for development of the vacant lot at Haste and Telegraph.

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE**

We believe that the large police presence on Telegraph Avenue in the last two months has broken the cycle of violence, although there is still a need for special law enforcement attention. We propose a strategy to continue that success in the short-term, while building a long-term community policing program that will keep the situation from re-occurring.

### **IMMEDIATE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- \* **MAINTAIN POLICE PRESENCE** on Telegraph Avenue commensurate with the need. Officers will be on foot and bicycle, as well as in cars, and will be instructed to enforce all laws even handedly in People's Park and on Telegraph Avenue. This will save the city money and return Telegraph Avenue to normal for the holidays.
- \* **EXPAND CONSISTENT AND VIGOROUS POLICE WORK** aimed at arresting drug dealers in People's Park and on Telegraph Avenue.
- \* **PREVENT THE SALE OF LIQUOR** to minors and intoxicated persons.
- \* **ENFORCE VIOLATIONS** such as harassment and blocking public access.
- \* **ENFORCE** business license, use permit, and sidewalk sweeping requirements.
- \* **ENCOURAGE CIVIL LEGAL ACTION** by citizens, business owners and community organizations in cases of assault and vandalism, so that the consequences of such actions are borne by those who choose to harm others.
- \* **ESTABLISH JOINT TRAINING** between UC/BPD and daily coordination in the Southside.
- \* **COORDINATE POLICE ACTIVITIES** with homeless services, mental health programs, building, and health inspectors to achieve comprehensive intervention.
- \* **URGE USE OF STAY-AWAY ORDERS** by municipal, superior, and juvenile court judges for chronic offenders who make Telegraph Avenue or People's Park the center of their operations.

#### INTERMEDIATE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- \* **STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SOCIAL SERVICES AND THE POLICE** by service providers participation in training police officers and Youth Advisors.
- \* **SEEK STATE LEGISLATION ALLOWING LOCAL ENFORCEMENT OF STATE LIQUOR LAWS**, since the ABC does not have the staff to adequately enforce its rules and regulations, but preempts local government from enforcing these same rules. The Mayor and Council should meet with our State Legislators and those from surrounding cities to introduce and lobby for legislation allowing for supplemental local enforcement of existing rules and regulations relating to alcohol sale and consumption.
- \* **CONTROL DEMONSTRATIONS** by publicizing clear and consistent rules and requiring permits for all demonstrations to ensure accountability to the surrounding neighborhoods and communities.
- \* **DEVELOP A COMMUNITY POLICING MODEL** specific for Telegraph Avenue and coordinate with citywide community policing programs and overall police needs.
- \* **STUDY THE POSSIBILITY OF A JOINT POLICE SUB-STATION** between the Berkeley Police Department and the University Police Department for the Telegraph area.

#### LONG TERM RECOMMENDATIONS:

- \* **ESTABLISH A YOUTH ADVISORS PROGRAM.** The City of Pasadena and several other California cities have successfully developed programs that involve young adults in working with younger students, making referrals to social service programs and recreation centers. The UC Police Department has begun an escort service staffed by college students. We urge that a working group of police officers from UCPD and BPD, youth service providers, UC students, and the city Youth Commission be established to research these models and recommend a concrete plan to the City Council.
- \* **CONDUCT A STUDY ON YOUTH CURFEWS** including the practices of nearby cities and other university towns. If a curfew is implemented it needs the broadest possible understanding and support from all effected groups including young people, university students, parents, school personnel, police, the courts, businesses, etc.

## ALTERNATIVES FOR YOUTH RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE

Our community has been struggling for many years to make up for cut-backs in social services and public education and an increase in poverty-driven problems that has placed our youth at great risk. Too often we have worked in isolation from one another. Wholehearted collaboration among the city, the schools, non-profit youth service providers, the University of California, parents and business people must be achieved if we are to provide positive opportunities and experiences for young people.

We are told by young people that they come to Telegraph Avenue because it is a regional retail center, to see their friends, and it is oftentimes safer than many of their neighborhoods. At times a small percentage of these young people break the law.

We believe it is essential for the long term health of our community that we ensure opportunities for positive activity are available to every young person in Berkeley during school hours, after school, in the evenings, and on weekends. This is an enormous challenge, and one that will require an investment of dollars and human energy by every major institution in our city.

### IMMEDIATE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS:

- \* **ESTABLISH A YOUTH SERVICES COORDINATOR** with the capability to mobilize all city departments to solve problems and focus community organizations.

Two of the major tasks of the Youth Services Coordinator should be to inventory city, school and non-profit youth activities in Berkeley, and to recruit volunteers for tutorial and after-school programs. Every young person who needs a tutor or "special friend" should have one available. Recruitment should focus on service clubs, university students, faculty and staff, and seniors.

- \* **CONTINUE YOUTH-POLICE DIALOGUES** and expand these to high school students, UC students and youth dialogues with community leaders.
- \* **MOBILIZE A MASSIVE INVOLVEMENT OF UC STUDENTS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE.** The existing city and school district mentorship programs should be expanded. More credit and structure should be given to Cal Corps.

- \* **BEGIN A PROGRAM TO HIRE BERKELEY YOUTH** through a city-school-business partnership. Encourage every small or medium-sized Berkeley business to consider a commitment to hire and mentor one young person. The Miles-Cutter Student job training internship model should be expanded to include other large employers, including the city and the university.
- \* **ESTABLISH A PLANNING GROUP** of city, school district, university, private sector, UC students and Berkeley youth to draw up concrete plans for a teen center as a base for social and recreational activities.
- \* **MAKE MORE SCHOOL FACILITIES AVAILABLE** for after school and weekend study and recreation, including school libraries.
- \* **ORGANIZE PARENT MEETINGS** to discuss programs and curfew issues.

#### **LONG TERM RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- \* **ESTABLISH A TEEN CENTER** as a base for a youth-adult corporation which can sponsor recreational and social activities for young people.
- \* **TRAIN RESPONSIBLE COMMUNITY LEADERS IN CRISIS MEDIATION** and organize them to be present in large numbers on Telegraph Avenue as a calming influence in tense situations.
- \* **INCREASE UNIVERSITY COMMITMENT TO YOUNG PEOPLE** by offering supervised activities in university facilities
- \* **TRAIN YOUTH ADVISORS** to counsel and refer young people to other safe youth activities throughout the city.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONTINUING WORK

This report is the beginning of the process of positive change in the Telegraph Avenue area. Key players in the continuing work will be the city, the business community, the university, the neighborhood residents, high school and UC students, BUSD representatives, community leaders, social service and health care providers, churches, parents of our youth and others committed to the values outlined in this report.

An ongoing organization is necessary to assure the work moves forward. The programs and actions of all concerned and involved individuals and organizations must be coordinated.

It is recommended that three groups be established to implement the specific recommendations and the vision of the Task Force. These are:

1. An Education and Outreach Group: to serve as Speakers Bureau; to conduct community education forums on Task Force recommendations; to solicit public input, involvement and new ideas; to obtain commitments from institutions, businesses, community groups, parents and other individuals to volunteer to take part.
2. A Planning and Policy Group: to develop long range plans and strategies; to bring together the diverse actors needed for coordination; to achieve commitments and to solicit financial support from public and private sources to carry out programs; and to identify needed changes in direction.
3. A Technical and Implementation Group: composed of city, university, business organization and social service organization staff to serve as the working group to prepare specific action plans; to identify needed resources; to serve as staff support to the other two groups; to coordinate the activities of the sub-groups, including assigning specific tasks.

Attachment A

MAYOR HANCOCK'S TASK FORCE ON TELEGRAPH AVENUE

Martha Acevedo	BUSD Board Member
Daschel Butler	Chief of Police
Keith Carson	Alameda County Supervisor-elect
Dennis Cohen	Berkeley Chamber of Commerce, President
Russ Ellis	Vice Chancellor of Undergraduate Affairs, UC Berkeley
Mike Farmer	Putnam Hall President
Margaret Fortune	ASUC President, Berkeley
Vicky Harrison	University of California-Berkeley, Police Chief
Anne Henderson	Berkeley League of Women Voters, Action Chairperson
Charles Holsten	Probation Officer, Section Supervisor
Catherine Jamison	Berkeley/Albany YMCA, Executive Director
Elaine Kim	Prof. of Asian American Studies
Barry Krisberg	Faculty Assistant to the Chancellor on the Status of
Jeffrey Leiter	Women, UC Berkeley
Gene Nakamura	National Council on Crime and Delinquency, President
Pedro Noguera	Downtown Berkeley Association, President
Jack Radisch	Athletic Department Chairperson, Berkeley High
Rebecca Rhine	School
Martin Sanchez-	Assistant Athletic Director, Berkeley High School
Jankowski	BUSD Board Member
Pastor Kim A. Smith	Prof. of Education, UC Berkeley
Hon. Wilmont Sweeney	Deputy District Attorney-Berkeley
Carla Woodworth	Telegraph Avenue Merchants Association, Director
	Prof. of Sociology, U.C. Berkeley
	Trinity Methodist Church, Pastor
	Judge, Juvenile Division
	Councilmember, District Seven

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